

## **Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention: Building Futures for Youth (BFY-II)**

**Methodology:** This was Phase II of the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (APP) study. The BFY-II study started in the fall of 2001 in 16 DC elementary schools and afterwards in 11 middle and junior high schools. The BFY-II study was designed to help reduce the high incidence of low birth weight babies and infant mortality in DC by reducing unintended pregnancies among adolescents. The primary goal of the project was to reduce the number of adolescent pregnancies by delaying the initiation of sexual intercourse among fifth, sixth, and seventh graders. The initial target population included the 2001–2002 cohort of fifth grade students from 16 DC elementary schools, consisting of predominantly African-American youth aged 10–11, and their parents. This cohort was followed in the sixth and seventh grades in only 11 junior high and middle schools based on the schools' feeder pattern.

The study incorporated a randomized, controlled design in which the 16 elementary schools were randomly assigned to either the intervention or control condition. The study cohort of fifth graders was followed into the sixth grade and also into the seventh grade. In each follow-up year, students in the sixth or seventh grades who had not been a member of the original fifth grade cohort were invited to participate in the study, and students who participated in an earlier year who did not attend a study school in a subsequent year were not included in the follow up. In each year, the intervention and evaluation were administered to the participating students in the study schools. The intervention strategy included a culturally appropriate curriculum for children, incorporating developmental, social, and study skills and understanding of puberty and sexuality. A parent educational curriculum was also developed that complemented the children's curriculum, and was offered to one caregiver of each intervention student.

Control schools did not receive any intervention during the study. They were, however, given curriculum materials following the completion of the study or at the end of the school involvement in the study. Students and parents from all schools (both intervention and control) were asked to complete a baseline survey prior to any intervention activities. Follow-up surveys were conducted at the end of the fifth grade school year, and in the beginning and end of both the sixth and seventh grade school years, using the same questionnaires (plus some additional questions to assess new information provided in the sixth and seventh grades' curricula). Students and parents were assigned study identification numbers that enabled the investigators to link the children to their parents and track the students over time.

A total of 562 students in the fifth grade participated in the baseline survey, and a total of 506 students participated in the follow-up survey administration. For the sixth grade students, 623 participated in the baseline survey, while 572 participated in the follow-up survey. Administration of the survey for the seventh grade students was completed for 338 students. Analyses were conducted and manuscripts were prepared on the fifth and sixth grade experience.

**Results:** Almost 5 percent of girls and 17 percent of boys reported that they had engaged in sexual intercourse. Only 34 percent of girls and 13 percent of boys said that they did not expect

to engage in any type of sexual contact in the next 12 months if they were going with someone they "liked a lot." The intervention significantly decreased the anticipation of having sex in the next 12 months among intervention versus control boys, but it had no other outcome effects among boys. Among girls, the intervention had no significant outcome effects. The only exception is that for both genders, compared with control students, intervention students increased their knowledge about puberty.